

**TOWN OF ACTON**  
**SIDEWALK COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Minutes of April 15, 2009**

7:00 p.m.

Acton Memorial Library Conference Room

**Next Committee Meeting:** Wednesday, May 13, 2009, 7:00 p.m. Acton Memorial Library, downstairs meeting room.

**Present:** Bettina Abe, Dick Calandrella, Sytske Campbell, Kate Chung, Pam Cochrane, Steve Evans, Leslie Hogan, Celia Kent, Paulina Knibbe

Acton citizen Dana Snyder-Grant attended the meeting.

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

**Citizen Concerns:**

There were no citizen concerns.

**Presentation:**

**Pervious Paving, Denise Leblanc, Children's Discovery Museum**

Denise LeBlanc explained that the Children's Discovery Museum wanted to establish a few projects that were environmentally sensitive to its natural surroundings. In particular, the Museum wanted to better manage problems related to stormwater runoff using low impact development technologies. They began with a rain barrels on building corners which capture rain water that falls from the roof. Captured water is used for watering the museum gardens and grass. In addition, the Museum asked MIT graduate students to design pathways for the museum that would also address runoff issues. Using pervious concrete pavers, the new walkway has funnel shaped openings that are filled with gravel which allow storm and rainwater to permeate into the ground slowly, reducing storm runoff into nearby waterways, and results in cleaner water in the groundwater aquifers. Ms. Leblanc also showed examples of grass pave and gravel pave. She did not have porous asphalt, however, suggested that the Town of Concord may be able to provide such an example for sidewalks. This material is more costly but can be very effective for areas where groundwater collects during Winter and Spring.

**Procedural Matters**

- The Committee accepted the Minutes from the March 11, 2009 meeting as amended.
- Sidewalk Members: Paulina Knibbe formally stepped down as Chair of the Sidewalk Committee. She will continue to be the Committee's liaison to the Board of Selectmen. Kate Chung is now the Chair of the Sidewalk Committee. Paulina's member seat is taken by Pam Cochrane. This leaves an associate member seat open beginning in July 2009.
  - **Action item:** Paulina will work with the Volunteer Coordinating Committee to select a new member.

## **Recap of Town Meeting**

All members were present. Paulina Knibbe made a comprehensive presentation for **Article 44** of the Committee's work and the sidewalks that needed permission by the Town to accept easements for five sidewalks. Town Meeting passed this Article 44.

## **Recap of Meeting with Bruce Stamski**

- **Sidewalk Progress:**
  - *Central Street* - The Town expects to restart progress on the Central Street sidewalk within two weeks.
  - *Prospect Street*- The Town continues to negotiate with the resident on Prospect Street who is resistant to the sidewalk. Another resident whose tree location obstructs the planned sidewalk is considering removing the tree.
- **Crosswalk at Hosmer:** Should Acton build a crosswalk from Hosmer House to the shopping plaza, it would either need to continue the crosswalk to the shops which might require taking a parking space, or build a sidewalk. Kate Chung asked Bruce to investigate these options, which he will do this summer/fall.
- **Tulip Tree on Spruce Street:** There are two options for this tree: 1) build a sidewalk around the tree on private property--\$6,000; 2) narrow the road--\$20,000; or, 3) tree removal --\$1,500. Raising the sidewalk above the roots is not an option as the sidewalk would be 20" above the road which could present a hazard for pedestrians.
- **517 Main Street:** Resident requested a sidewalk for the South side of Main Street from Isaac Davis Monument to Post Office Square. This includes four residences, two on level with the road and two located down a steep embankment, and a commercial building. A sidewalk exists on the opposite side of Main Street, however, building a sidewalk on the South side would link existing sidewalk to a planned sidewalk (Post Office Square to Great Road)
  - **Action Item:** Bettina Abe will evaluate Isaac Davis Monument to Post Office Square.

**Wetherbee Plaza and other site plans** – Developer sent a letter to Town objecting to a requirement that he build a sidewalk in the new Wetherbee development, saying it is not likely to be used by pedestrians and that a boardwalk across the wetlands would be unsafe and difficult to maintain. The developer proposed a painted strip as a walkway along the board of the parking lot and driveway instead of a sidewalk.

- **Action item:** Paulina Knibbe will respond with the recommendation to use alternative material or delineate the walking area with Bot dots or a rumble strip at the next Board of Selectman meeting.

## **Lazaro Circle on River Street and Faulkner Mill off High Street:**

The Planning Board wrote an approval letter that vaguely mentioned sidewalk recommendations and did not reflect what the Sidewalk Committee had submitted for recommendation in either case.

- **Action item:** Leslie Hogan will ask Roland Bartl whether or not the Sidewalk Committee's suggestions were taken under advisement.

**Letters to High Street residents:**

Both the letter from the Sidewalk Committee and the letter from two High Street residents are finalized.

➤ **Action items:**

- Leslie Hogan will print High Street address labels.
- Sytske Campbell will print letters and Kate Chung will sign the letter from the Committee. Residents Elkoury and Brokhoven will sign letter from them to High Street residents.
- Sytske will send both letters and Right of Access form to High Street residents.
- Paulina Knibbe will investigate the ability to use the Town's letterhead for the Sidewalk Committee letter.

**Design Guidelines**

- Celia Kent augmented the draft guidelines with photo of different sidewalk scenarios as well as a reference section. Sytske provided a section on disabled access and website for formal reference for developers; however the Committee would like to determine if there is a more specific guideline for design for disabled access and if guidelines differ for the public vs. private land.
  - A few Guidelines sections need more complete information i.e. planting suggestions and lighting. This document will continue to be a working document for the time being.
- **Action item:** Sytske will look at ADA guidelines for Small Towns and consult expert for greater detail on guidelines.
- **Action item:** Celia will provide guidelines to Committee.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sytske Campbell